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ABSTRACT

As administrators work through contextual persuasion to affect people, activities coordination hinges to some extent on the quality of a leader's argumentation skills. Policy administration is a process of arguing explanations. Six categories vital for administrators to cover to deter critics while putting forward policy are: relevant information, claim, qualifier, warrant, backing, and rebuttal. Policy backings can be separated into seven frames: method centered; intuitive; ethical; causal; motivational; parallel case; and authoritative. Examples of how one administrator argued from each frame are given to help select arguments during policy formation. Two figures further illustrate argument structures for policy backing. (14 notes, 39 references) (EJS)

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POLICY ADMINISTRATION AS RHETORIC: ONE LEADER AND HIS ARGUMENTS

Richard G. Townsend

Administration may have preceded rhetoric -- indeed my old teacher Lewis Mumford (1967) has argued that the first humans integrated large-scale public affairs through such administrative activities as planning, organizing, scheduling, and controlling before they even learned how to speak. Today, however, as top administrators work through contextual persuasion to affect people, the coordinating of activities hinges to some extent on the quality of a leader's skills in argumentation.

In this chapter, I explore aspects of the policy discourse for one executive, seeing him as a something of a stand-in for other peak administrators. Little serious work has been done in this realm. Traditional students of public policy tend to prefer explaining allocations in terms of long-term forces such as political culture, class, ideology, presence of unions, and levels of problem-solving knowledge. If these scholars comment at all on "the rhetorical," it is as insincere, decorative, extravagant, or manipulative talk. Likewise, leadership consultants give higher priority to attributes such as persistence, stability, and "concept of the total" than to a policy administrator or leader's "mere" rhetoric. In contra-distinction to these forebears, I propose to conceptually link the domains of leadership, policy, and oral rhetoric.

BASES IN THREE DOMAINS

Writers within the vast prescriptive literature on leadership see the executive as prompting events to happen, if she or he stays well informed, takes risks, focuses time and energy, and appreciates that any altering of others' concepts at best occurs only gradually (e.g., Bennis, 1976; Wrapp, 1984). Texts in the field of educational administration (e.g., Immegart, 1988) are among the most hopeful that leaders can indeed make a difference; presumably, in certain situations a positional leader's values, traits, styles, articulations of purposes, and alignments to expectations of outside forces can non-coercively direct and coordinate others' means and ends. Interpreters of empirical studies have found that appointed leaders of schools can have impact in certain kinds of issues (internal and routine policy decisions) within certain

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kinds of communities (larger and more heterogeneous ones) (Boyd, 1976, but also see Lutz & Iannaccone, 1978 and Burlingame, 1988). However, a number of other modern analyses are more pessimistic about the impacts of leadership (Burns, 1978; Edinger, 1976; Hockin, 1977). There, unless they happen to appear at one of history's "forking points" to act as institutional embodiments of purpose, very senior executives are perceived as so constrained by institutional, political, psychological, and other variables that they have relatively little scope within which to act (Paige, 1977; McLeod, 1988). Just as well too that rulerships are contained, some observers might add: a leader can over-simplify, become obsolescent in information, adapt irrelevant criteria for policy-making, lose a sense of proportion, sacrifice a value base, and so on.

A rather different perception has been developed of late among a number of non-traditional students of public policy who emphasize the autonomy of the state (Downs, 1968; Block, 1980; Poulantzas, 1978; Gogh, 1979; Pal, 1987). Those who occupy state positions are thought to possess their own values, powers, material bases, and insights. Neither dominated by capitalists or labor, these public authorities can be regarded as self-interested maximizers, pursuing personal prestige as well as income and their sense of morality through expansions of their services to diverse publics. Empirical spadework is necessary to conform or disconfirm this conceptual lead, but this view of the state *is* promising as it opens up the possibility of public managers expressing their own creativities and dispositions, perhaps becoming leaders for the good, right, and just life. A unique quality of institutional leadership, or statesmanship, may reside then in ways of defining and justifying organizational policy. State policies, then, would more than simply reflect the ruling class and those long-term movements of society that traditional policy students have noticed. A role would exist after all for human agency.

At bottom, my assumption is that human agency is reflected in rhetoric. In argumentation, a leader is involved in a process of policy construction, finding good reasons for public actions, helping to bring focus to the behavior of organizational members, projecting identities for his or her guidelines for public action. On the premise that such mobilizations of support are worth analyzing, here I explore one policy administrator's argumentation.

In effect, I am maintaining that policy administration is a process of arguing. In a democracy, officials do not simply make policies; if they have reasons, they have to give them. Like politicians who offer constituents justifications for their votes or akin to lobbyists who represent their causes as serving public interests, elite administrators have to put forward explanations. This rhetoric can deter critics -- even if the grounds are afterthoughts, intended to rationalize decisions taken on other reasons. More specifically, students of argumentation (e.g., Toulmin, 1958; Freeley, 1976) would hold that at least six categories are vital. The reader should not despair if she or he does not quite "connect" with all of this listing; while it is more than a jumping-off point, the key pillars are the fourth and fifth categories:

1. *Relevant Information,* i.e., evidence from policy problems, alternatives, actions, outcomes, and performances; these data can be in the form of conclusions, expressed needs, generalized statistics, and so forth.
2. *Claim,* i.e., the conclusion of the policy argument, typically the subject of disagreement or conflict among different segments of the community. When a policy claim follows the presentation of information, the claim implies "therefore." For example, if semestering is more efficient and effective *(relevant information),* it follows therefore that secondary schools should forego teaching courses for short periods over year-long bases, i.e., half-year courses should be scheduled for extended periods of the school day. Hence, policy claims are the logical consequence of policy-relevant information.
3 *Qualifier,* i.e., the degree to which the arguer is certain about a claim, ranging from "Definitely" to "Probably Not."
4. *Warrant,* i.e., the assumption which permits an argument to move from relevant information to claim. One explanatory warrant: the concentration afforded by semestered courses are the best way to ensure that students master assigned materials. The role of the warrant is to carry information to a claim about which there is dissensus, thus providing a reason for accepting the claim.
5. *Backing,* i.e., an additional assumption that may support a warrant which may not be accepted at face value. A backing enables a policy advocate to step back further and state underlying assumptions. For semestering fewer courses over a single term, the start of an explanatory backing could be "less is more, " i.e., if scheduling allows longer lessons, teachers can work at greater depth every day with students. A motivational backing for educators is: "With fewer students each term, semestering would mean you'd get to know your students better and have fewer discipline problems."
6. *Rebuttal,* i.e., an anticipated objection to a claim. Against semestering, a rebuttal might be that semestering undercuts certain subjects like instrumental music where practice throughout a year-long course can facilitate the acquisition of greater skill. In turn, a rebuttal to that rebuttal might be that semester-system students truly interested in music could keep up their prowess by participating in year-round community bands. [1]

Students of rhetoric have interpreted and applied these distinctions, so that policy warrants and backings can now be separated into at least seven modes or frames: method-centred, intuitive, ethical, causal, motivational, parallel case or comparative, and authoritative (Brockriede & Ehninger, 1960; Rein, 1976; MacRae, 1976; Dunn, 1981).[2]

For a second example of the structure of an argument, consider this drastically abbreviated reasoning for one reform in education:

FIGURE 1 ABOUT HERE

Below, elements of argumentation are introduced separately and more fully.

Even though the scholarly literature for several decades has carried the idea of the policy process as a succession of distinct phases (Dror, 1968; May & Wildavsky, 1978; Hogwood & Gunn, 1984), so far as I know, no work connects these phases to acts of leadership. Evidently unstudied too is an executive's rhetoric about issues during policy stages. While agreement does not exist on the number of these stages through which an issue may pass, a convention is that at the very least the policy cycle includes formulation, implementation, and evaluation. While a school administrator may make a big deal about the difference between policy and administration, to her and him the dividing lines between these stages often may appear artificial, not demarcations that she or he consciously employs when reacting to (and defining for school board members) a new problem in the field. Nevertheless, this trilogy of phases is employed below for heuristic purposes.

But first let me introduce the 45-year-old Director of Education whose rhetoric I start to dissect. Examples of his argumentation comprise most of this chapter. That detailing necessarily is idiosyncratic and situation-specific, and some readers will find my treatment boring, especially since (as it happens) a fairly complimentary portrait of an administrator emerges. Those chiefly interested in my conclusions should turn directly to the penultimate section, "Leadership, Policy, and Argument."

WALLY BEEVOR, POLICY ADMINISTRATOR

Wally Beevor is, as a group of secondary students said in a musical tribute to him, "energetic, ruggedly handsome, [with a] friendly handshake, silvery hair, a friendly smile . . . and sparkling eyes . . . . a really cool dude." Also, he is one of Canada's dozen or so most widely known chief executive officers for elementary and secondary schools. To begin, Beevor is celebrated for having developed in the 1970s, while at the Lakehead Board in a corner of northern Ontario, a widely-copied plan for deferring salaries. Through it, teachers have the option of taking 80 percent of their earnings each year over four years so that, in the fifth year, they are free from duties while earning their same income. Installing this scheme at a time of declining enrolments, Beevor initially sought to reduce layoffs of teachers. But when the numbers of students began climbing upwards again, his salary-holdback arrangement was turned into a tool for professional development: teachers used the plan to take fifth-year sabbaticals, sometimes to travel, to go to graduate school, or to learn more about themselves by

trying out new ventures. At the provincial level, Beevor also had captured some attention by initiating "single-team bargaining" at the Lakehead. Instead of adversarial teams facing each other during contract talks, representatives of labor and management were expected to (and apparently did) peaceably sit around a common table jointly settling problems. Remote as northerly Lakehead may seem in a jurisdiction as vast and truly far-flung as Ontario -- after all, in area this province is larger than 8 Czechoslovakias, or 4 United Kingdoms, or 1.5 Texases -- Beevor's reputation for achievement, for organization, and for deflating contention would have preceded him to any board in that province.

By the time I caught up with him for this study, Beevor had moved to the south-central part of Ontario and to the Halton Board of Education, one of Canada's 15 largest. For a large suburban/exurban county encompassing five somewhat competitive towns, he was administering 82 schools, 43,000 students (for most of whom discipline was not a major problem), and 5,500 staff (some were using that salary-holdback scheme). Early on, Beevor had caused some stir across the province for firing and demoting certain administrators he had inherited; "ruthless" was the characterization made by those who thought that the protective Ontario "way" was to cool out officials less abruptly and visibly. One retired principal alleges that Beevor then told him that "your job is to make me look good." Six years later when we met, his system and its Director did seem to be looking good: over 75 percent of a group of citizens polled for a Board survey had given his organization a performance rating of A or B. To that realm, Beevor had not succeeded in importing single-team bargaining; Halton, after all, is fiscally conservative, a place where even the idea of collective bargaining could be anathema to a former trustee who has said that "letting teachers bargain is like letting the monkeys dish out the peanuts." Yet in any event, for the most part, Beevor's tenure had been marked by peaceably-settled negotiations, a spinoff perhaps of his relataively upbeat style. Although I looked for it, I did not see a "make-me-look-good" style; differing from a number of other Ontario executives in education's spotlight, he did not come across (at least to me and my informants) as a mean person.

Over the course of a year and with no set framework in mind, as a "shadow" I observed Beevor interact with individuals at various levels of his organization. Additionally, I queried over 45 persons who had first-hand knowledge of "life with Beevor." My data-gathering was brought to a close in 1988 when Beevor resigned from Halton to accept a provincial posting as Assistant Deputy Minister of Education, in charge of a large division for learning programs. I suspect that his new colleagues find him as I did, usually easy-talking but not verbally garrulous.[3]

In my hearing, Beevor never mentioned those analytical terms I introduced in the preceding section, i.e., claim, warrant, backing, value-critical, parallel case, and so forth. And he was as surprised as I that, in the end, my participant observations (including notes of various debates he got into) led to a codifying of a portion of his argumentation. Beevor probably would be surprised too if I were to depict him as a particularly original Herbert-Simon-like thinker on policy and leadership; much of what I heard Beevor say is reminiscent of the most recent

treatises on management and on involving personnel at all levels in all functions (e.g., Peters & Waterman, 1982; Newberry, 1987). If Beevor has a special handle on leadership, it seems to me that one part of that quality is his oral skill in claiming, for policy sake, that different things should be included in or excluded from various categories.

Though this study of a central leader's harnessing of rhetoric to policy may point in a fresh direction, this chapter still will disappoint readers looking for research based on a larger population than just one man. Yet profiles of single leaders do have their didactic strengths too, among which are their capacities for exploring new themes and for starting to bring alive detailed textures of particular circumstances. In the spirit of that case tradition but also cognizant of the methodological issues encountered when "boswelling" a high official (Macpherson, 1985), I selectively present fragments of that texture in Halton. This account further has the distinct advantage of being about a highly gifted and articulate administrator, something which a number of accounts are not (e.g., Walcott's ethnography of the bland "Ed Bell", 1971).

A limitation of this study is that it does not acknowledge other gifted and articulate people at all levels in Halton, e.g., teachers, support staff, principals, superintendents, ratepayers, trustees. Equally short shirft is given to historical antecedents to Beevor's tenure. Those pre-1981 circumstances and those gifted persons probably would do very well for any leader. For his part, Beevor recognizes that much of his success, if not his rhetoric, is fueled by others.

SELECTED ARGUMENTS DURING POLICY FORMULATION

Helping to choose problems for public action, articulating the professional's criteria and priorities, and communicating to staff a Board's purposive interventions within an issue-area – these are crucial tasks that school executives undertake in policy formulation. Given that problems are multiple and that resources for their resolutions are scarce, competition among idea champions at this particular phase can be fierce. Even if absenting themselves from the remainder of the policy flow, winners at this stage achieve a crucial victory just by delineating problems that governments take hold of. In this phase, Beevor argues primarily but not exclusively on the bases of method and of value-criticism.

Arguing from Method

For more than a decade, Halton had had annual Aims and Objectives, a Priorities & Expenditures Committee to sort out various needs, a Innovations Committee which travelled across North America looking for good ideas, and task forces (e.g., for teacher evaluation,

primary education, leadership development) which looked ahead to imminent problems and opportunities. One of Beevor's contributions has been to sophisticate and refine this planning process. To a degree, he has done this by winning the debate over what is the valid method for defining situations, for debating right and wrong, and for placing one's preferred definitions onto the Board's crowded agenda. The central machinery of Beevor's administration includes "situational analyses" and "goal settings" which lead to highly visible "policy developments" which become operationalized into "five-year plans," budgets, and implementation activities. Through series of meetings, which can begin at the school, mission statements are floated, tested against precedents and available baseline or system data, and worked-over for consistency with other policies. More reactions now are elicited from more people on more committees. In his era at Halton, he introduced a language of how policy formulations become accepted (once different interests have negotiated ideas through those aforementioned hurdles of situational analyses, goal-settings, mission-statings, and other consistency-bringing steps). It is this procedure, incidentally, that has given Beevor the provincial reputation as being "all process," a charge not supported by my data about his substance here.

With the help of Lorne Downey, a professor at the University of British Columbia and an authority on goals of school governance, [4] Beevor made the claim – not long after his arrival – that Halton needed such an elaborate approach. To coax various political and bureaucratic interests to accept his meta (or transcending) routine, Beevor could point to his own situational analysis of the Halton Board he had just joined. Some friction at the Board table was common, trustees often ratifying proposals only by the slimmest of margins. Reportedly, a segment of these and other officials did not feel actively involved in orchestrating the system's future. And as his visits with principals seemed to prove, certain schools were not altogether buying into initiatives of the central office. Insiders seemed widely respectful and loyal to the Board's first two Directors, Jim Singleton from 1969-75 and Em (for Emerson) Lavender from 1975-81, but as with all the other systems that periodically chose to import top executives from outside the organization, Halton had reached a point in 1981 where "new motivation, new communication, and a breath of fresh air seemed attractive." Also appearing to need attention, according to the relevant information of some, was 1) the consultation process that Lavender particularly had been nurturing and 2) relationships, especially between the system and the media, between the business and pedagogical functions, between the centre and the periphery (i.e., some superintendents were not seen as facilitators).

To build confidence that any fragmentation could be overcome and that rational improvement was possible, Beevor and Downey held a seminar for the Board, stressing that their model for long-term policy development would help the trustees "anticipate needs rather than respond to sudden issues." By writing policy that would dovetail the best ideas from all levels, order and a systematic approach would be brought to organizational practice. (As backing to that method-centred warrant, Beevor pointed to a number of other school jurisdictions, such as Lakehead, that had capitalized on trustees' preferences for a greater

"feel" for their organization and for "a legitimate route to achieve personal goals with the Board's corporate structure." In evoking those systems' evidently successful routines for more extensive policy-making, Beevor presented backing in the parallel-case mode, discussed below.)

In time, that overarching meta-policy passed, unanimously. By representing Halton's needs as he did, Beevor had made necessary his particular procedures for finding and resolving predicaments. Before long, the size of the organization's policy manual mushroomed. Timelines for staff to achieve priorities became more explicit. While it would be misleading to suggest that all actors had ownership of the policies that emanted from the new process, sufficiently large elements of the community appeared to be, in the phrase of one member, "working as a team." Helpfully too, a number of "uncooperative and obstreperous" trustees, allegedly unsympathetic to this meta-method, removed themselves from the Board.[5]

Typically, Beevor does not support those who attempt an end-run around his consultation-oriented and data-rich process. For example, at a planning retreat with his superintendents, Beevor had occasion to tell an idea champion for Effective Schools that:

> O.K., ____, you're very intense and committed on this [propcsal for a data system for the pilot Effective Schools program] and we don't want you to be discouraged by our direct feedback. The discussion is intended to help. What we want to do is make a good product even better....But the idea has come down the street too soon...You've gotten too far ahead of us.

Those words came after other members of his administrative council, including Beevor, had turned down a proposal for which groundwork evidently had not been laid. "Organizations," Beevor later reflected, "have a way of dulling the outrider," and the high-profile and innovative Superintendent championing that data-system proposal had failed to clear a costly but still somewhat nebulous idea with principals, who in turn had not had much of a chance to explore the idea's ramifications with their staffs. To propel that notion forward to the next round of annual budgeting, the idea champion would have to come back, armed with more data, after more consultation with committees. Or as that Superintendent recognized (after Beevor had asked him point-blank, "As a result of our discussion, what are you going to do?"), "The system needs something more that you can lay your hands on." The outrider had verbalized the dynamic that the system operates according to the meta-policy. [6] (Making that point had its cost for the Director: years later, that same Superintendent regularly and widely bad-mouthed Beevor as being too cautious.)

Arguing Claims From Intuition

For all his reliance on the logic of his "This is how we'll decide" meta-process, Beevor has been known occasionally to ignore evidence. He can argue instead for new policies on the basis of what "hits" him in the organization. Pointing out, as he likes to do, that "good judgment

can't be legislated," he recognizes a place for subjectivity and tacit knowledge in policy formulation. In Pascal's terms, "the heart has its reasons, which reason does not know." Curiously, my interviewees did not seem to feel a violation of the Board's shared norm of consultation.

Thus, for example, when one official inquired about the initiation of an Award of Excellence for an outstanding principal with the leading question, "Did this go through the [meta] process?", Beevor first replied in terms that left no doubt about who was in charge, "No, I just did it." Aware, though, that because he "felt like it" was an insufficient standard of judgment, Beevor went on, "We've talked about it before, talked about it a lot" *(relevant information)*. Then looking around the room and perhaps appreciating that policy formulation does not invariably require his meta-process' elements for gradually clearing of a host of channels, he gave his intuitive warrant. "We just didn't seem to be getting anywhere," Beevor smiled and next delivered this rebuttal to his take-charge action: "This Award policy *is* an exception . . . so, I hope in time the system develops formal criteria for it." As he well realized, a test of his standard of judgment was whether it could be applied consistently, i.e., did Beevor's spotlighting of an innovative principal mean that anyone else who could claim that certain "spark" was entitled to that special honor too? But before that matter got worked-out "in time," Beevor's inner mental state (insight, judgment, understanding, gut feeling) was telling him, "*Now* is the season to salute that secondary principal. She helped turn around that school from the one to avoid to the system's 'in' school."

Superintendents tell of other times when Beevor argues on the basis of intuitive and personal judgment. Often the occasions seem to be ones where new symbols are created. Without objective data, for example, he portrayed an across-the-Board need for a special mid-year occasion to "showcase" student achievement, and a large number of people came around to tacitly letting that portrait speak for them. Available data suggest, however, that such intuition definitely is not his central mode in any policy phase: he realizes that recognizing someone simply because he" felt like it" is unlikely to win much support; deciding against another administrator's claim because that person can be an arrogant bore may be a refreshingly candid reason but is more of a private reason than the public reason that Beevor likes to muster. "I try for an approach that's rational," Beevor shrugs with an explanatory assumption, ostensibly referring in part to the rationality he has tried to program into the system via the meta process' strategic planning. "But," he adds, "we don't operate in a rational world."

Arguing From Ethics

In this popular mode of argument, warrants and backings are posited that are value-critical. That is, policy ideas are highlighted for their goodness or badness, the rightness or wrongness of their consequences, the fairness or unfairness of their principles and burdens. In part, Beevor has been able to defend his meta-policy approach to policy formulation principles

and on the ethical grounds that it is democratic in its inclusiveness.

Beevor recognizes the old saw about "giving each person his due" as tapping into a powerful drive for egalitarian order *(relevant information)*. Yet he lives "too much of my life getting ready for Board meetings" to advance a claim for the pure democracy of, say, the New England town meeting. Beevor's explanatory warrant against such participatory democracy for his Board's governance is that all of Halton's residents could not participate in policy-making. An explanatory backing of sorts: if each of Halton County's 281,000 individuals were given 5 minutes of speaking time, at least 9,780 days, day and night, would be consumed in resolving any one issue. Yet, and here is where an ethical argument for representative democracy comes in, Beevor warrants that his trustees are committed enough democrats to weigh any policy proposal presented by anyone. He has a more specific ethical backing too: while such deliberations complicate those trustees' jobs and his, ethically it would be "wrong" to define in advance which problems are dealt with, which options are given status. (A year or so after Beevor's retirement, a citizens group claimed, on its own ethical warrant, that it was frozen-out by this too "top-heavy"approach.)

In that vein, one responsibility that Beevor has *not* delegated is appraising the 140 or so situational analyses, which he requests as part of his meta-process, from internal units (e.g., schools, educational psychologists, bus drivers) and external groups (e.g., chambers of commerce, university women's clubs, childrens' aid societies). In an era when the provincial government has not particularly boosted community involvement in policy development, he looks for answers to questions like this: "What did the Halton system do last year that you liked?" and "What needs should the system address in the coming year?" Once this relevant information is collected, members of these associations have told me that Beevor gets back to them personally with thanks and with claims like "You know, maybe we ought to have a policy on that."

These situational analyses are fed into the system's long-range planning process, a process that has committees of board members, administrators, and educational specialists (drawing upon their specialized competences and vested responsibilities) consciously and publicly trying to address diverse concerns. Granted, the relevant data generated by these situational analyses sometimes are incomplete and partial. Yet by way of making an explanatory warrant supporting a claim that his Board operates as a representative democracy, Beevor points out that any absence of perfect information leaves Board members free to decide whether their own judgments, rather than the expressed will of other stakeholders, should be honored. Before citizens groups, he is a thorough enough debater to round out his argument, providing a rebuttal to his conception of grassroots democracy: although it may not happen often, local decisions always can be overturned or amended by senior levels of government.

Beevor concludes that the meta-process is flexible and adjustable for crises. Yet as an annual budget is about to be brought forward, he is unenthusiastic about re-opening the process to those who have not been involved in discussions to date – when that date includes more than

a year of hauling and pulling for agreements *(claim)*. With the policy-relevant information that a need exists to "treat likes alike," Beevor gives the ethical warrant that by avoiding the give-and-take of the Board's rules for moving an idea through the system, johnny-come-latelys would be unfairly and suddenly advantaged in policy formulation. Value-critically, he backs this point by indicating that the values of the many, not just of the process' late-comers, simultaneously ought to be satisfied.

The point has been made that Beevor's meta-process enables the better informed and more articulate to impose their wills on the weaker. Conceivably, those "in the know" can conceptualize their concerns with just the "right" sophistication to relevant committees at just the "right" moments of choice-making. That, in essence, is the core of an argument made some years ago by a group of secondary students who held that they had been penalized by *not* knowing the system was developing a smoke-free policy. The system's policy did not derive, these students said, from the explicit consent of the governed students. Protagonists for "butting out," being more informed about Board norms and routines, had well-crafted situational analyses and had seized timely moments to carry the day against smoking. In reaction, those protesting students had an ethical declaration of their own: in a democracy, no individual, not even one who smoked, should become merely an instrument of the will of another (or of a board). These students then went beyond argumentation: they blocked vehicular traffic in front of their school, hoping to catch headlines and promote a policy that was more "legitimate" in reflecting the views of "the people" (their student selves).

Not by a long shot did they succeed in undoing the ban on smoking: the system's established process of government by elected representatives, working in tandem with committees, prevailed. As the disappointed students learned, "You don't go to a higher level until you've exhausted the one just above you." That, from Beevor's organization, was a claim about democracy as well as about bureaucracy; the not-yet-adult students were shown to have such unequal standing compared to elected Board members, a common explanatory warrant, that their claims for equal governance were deemed inappropriate. But then, consistent with another ethically grounded argument that the purpose of democracy is not to make policy-making simpler but to make it more adequate, Beevor won another claim: the system employed an outside expert to survey students on assorted dimensions of their schooling. System-wide encouragement was given as well for secondary students to meet after school with teachers to explore the smoke-free rationale. From an ethical angle, Beevor could and did maintain that the Board's policy was not completely right or satisfying *until* at least its dissenters could consider the value-critical position of those who categorize smoking as "doing harm to self and others."

SELECTED ARGUMENTS DURING POLICY IMPLEMENTATION

Beevor's world *is* rational to the extent that once trustees approve a policy, staff engage

in the detailed design of associated programs. As elsewhere, adherences to standards are necessary as are regularities of results.

In asking how on-the-ground activities actually "fit with policies," Beevor exploits value-critical arguments. For instance, he justifies approving of "5 or 6 requests per year" for secondary students to attend schools outside their neighborhoods on the ethical grounds of freedom of choice. "When the application gets to me, principals know I'll grant it," he says. "I feel it's a good thing. Basically, I'm an open-boundaries man." Other portions of his arguments in policy implementation are cast in method-centered terms, e.g., "If ___ [an influential trustee] had his way, that teacher would be out of the system tomorrow . . . . The thing is, the process [of dismissal] doesn't work that way." However, more of Beevor's arguments in this policy phase are made in causal and pragmatic terms, considered next.

Arguing from Cause

After several passing mentions to it above, at last we come to a separate treatment of the mode where explanations help to advance a claim. In causal arguments for policy installation (as in other policy phases), warrants and backings about a situation or stakeholder are related to a phenomenon's powers *(causes)* and results *(effects)*.

Almost from the start of his Halton career, a "problem" for Beevor was his physical distance from co-workers and the public. In formal rhetoric, his relevant information fastened on the tucking-away of his given office in an out-of-the-way space on the second floor of the Board's central office. According to his explanatory warrant as the "new boy on the block," he needed to be astraddle many information channels, the better to inform and to be informed. A relationship existed, he explained to anyone who would listen, between propinquity and accessing information. For productivity, his office needed to be shifted downstairs to the middle of the first floor, near the main door. (Indeed, he decreed, that whole lobby had to be refurbished and made more inviting to the public.) As additional warrant to that claim, Beevor reminded colleagues that a leader symbolically can make himself a compass point for change by creating an event. His backing was that through that shift of office space, the "word" would go out that he was no backroom boy – purportedly, his door was open. In time, through that door came vice-principals, leaders of home and school associations, librarians, part-time cleaning women, real estate agents wanting to know about the system's operations, and others who (I repeatedly was told) had not been so beckoned to a newcomer's central office before.

Reasoning from cause to effect, from warrant to claim, Beevor secondly tried to improve information flow by reasoning that if he had fewer tiers between himself and program people, he would be more "in the picture." With the relevant generalization that he needed more valid information from even more sources, Beevor began claiming the right to hold weekly

breakfast meetings with elected executives of various other power groups. The first Tuesday of a month, he would convene at a Burlington restaurant with officials from a principals' association. A week later, he would chat over his morning meal with spokespersons for the system's social workers and psychologists. The third week, he would converse with officials for the secretaries' organization. And so on.

At first, these chats appeared threatening to superintendents. Beevor's slicing through the pyramidal structure was seen as flying in the face of (bureaucratic) theory on how to manage, and these staff and line subleaders feared they might have to "run interference on" new programs before they had sufficient resources and infrastructure. In several well-noticed instances outside that breakfast circuit, instead of aligning himself with those superintendents, Beevor had sided with principals or even with parents who had "good ideas"; now, the story goes, these superintendents feared that -- over a fried egg and orange juice with their subordinates at the Harvester Restaurant -- their new Director might undermine superintendental authority, possibly re-directing their rulings. When Beevor started bringing issues back from those breakfasts and seemed attentive to performance requirements defined by other stakeholders, the eight or so superintendents were concerned that their Director was extending the flattening of the hierarchy that his predecessor, Lavender, had initiated by eliminating the post of Deputy Director. Channels were being bypassed. With needs and resources of their own, these senior administrators were owed, as Beevor soon realized, a fuller explanation.

From an information and value base, he argued that the system had become so large that he could not singly process all the germane considerations about people and situations. Of course superintendents and the system's middle managers were indispensable in selecting what was vital; that was why he had delegated real authority and responsibility to them and why they could allocate a small percentage of their time for special projects (like Effective Schools) that they felt strongly about. That also was why he also was going to make use of such management tools as lateral transfers and secondments. But, as data worked their way up the organization's ladder, he warranted that bias inevitably crept in, interfering with effective administration. To reduce bias and to facilitate unity, Beevor declared that he had to understand the "truth" experienced by staff at other levels -- and, to demonstrate his orientation towards change, he had to send a signal that the success of the organization depended on the people in the front lines. (Actually, Beevor did not speak so pompously about "sending a signal," but that's seems to have been part of what he had in mind.) By talking with those in the front lines, he did not intend to undercut superintendents, but he had to "fight the rumor mill" that surrounds every head office. Organizations, Beevor's backing concluded, "do not work just through formal channels but through informal ones, and anyone who thinks otherwise is naive."

In time, superintendents' concerns waned; breakfast meetings continued. At them, the first-level bureaucrat and the third or fourth level bureaucrats would open with banter, then shift

into more business-like discussions. Three items:

- One breakfast, the five members of the executive for the elementary group of principals might relay their puzzlement, say, over whether custodians or principals had the final word once the school day was over. In response, Beevor might first argue from authority, specifically the legal status of the province's Education Act which accords after-school responsibility to principals. That said, he might argue at greater length in an explanatory mode, i.e., if the principal is to coordinate the school's outreach to the community, then he or she has to have the discretion to make the facility's after-hours commitments.
- The next week, the eight members of the executive for the custodians might wonder (among other topics) what to do at night about a parent volunteer who consumes liquor on school premises at students' basketball games. By way of explaining his rejection of "anybody boozing at school," Beevor might reply with a general proposition about civility, i.e., "Volunteer or not, a parent like that is out of line. He's a guest at a particular kind of public institution. If he 'cracks one,' he's not being consistent with the institution's expectations for guests." In this exchange, Beevor also might refer to community standards, providing a warrant that is a parallel case (assuming a similarity among public places) that the parent volunteer "wouldn't walk through the Burlington Mall doing that." Finally, with an authoritative warrant, Beevor might mention *1)* the policy manual's prohibition of liquor at student functions and *2)* the need to provide a standard of safety and care for the school's clients, but usually those by-the-book references would be brief.
- During the following Tuesday morning get-together, the executive for the schools' secretaries might convey their upsetment with commercial salespersons who maintain that they have central-office approval to sell luggage, cookbooks, pantyhose, and other items on school premises. From the time that issue emerged, here is an abstract of a cause-and-effect Beevorism: "If this sort of open-sesame is offered all manner of merchants, mall owners will cry foul. Staffs and students could be distracted during work." (Out of that discussion, new procedures were introduced to reinforce the Board policy of restricting commercial business on school property.)

And so Beevor, advocate for policy claims, would hear and speak to assorted themes. Sometimes he would promise to get back to these fellow-breakfasters with data they wanted "by tomorrow noon. " At other time, he would propose a strategy, e.g., "Either we share the responsibility with the County Health Officer or we put pressure on him to increase his responsibility (for hair lice)." Occasionally too, Beevor would urge those elected executives to approach other people within the system, and "If you don't have success with them, " he would remark, "let me know."

Then over a second cup of coffee, Beevor would share his outlooks about a miscellany of matters -- about the high fees required for a day's work by the system's lawyers ("1,500 big ones"), about "working the numbers" for maximum grants from the province, about "educating the trustees" to think comprehensively, about revisions demanded by women teachers in

groundrules for Halton's leadership course, and so forth. These parts of breakfast sessions mostly were high on information-sharing -- without formal warrants, backings, or policy claims.[7] All the same, some of the cause-and-effect dynamic typically lurked within Beevor's observations. At one point, as an example, he speculated about a newly formed alignment of trustees, "They've isolated themselves . . . . They're perceived as having the power to get what they want" *(relevant information about implementing the Board's school-closure policy)*. . . . But I suspect they won't succeed, the Board won't keep the school open *(claim)*. . . .Their presentation was very weak *(explanatory warrant)* . . . . They didn't strike when the iron was hot *(explanatory backing)*." *[Italicized words supplied.]*

Arguing from Motivation

A policy should be adopted for one of two reasons -- because of the motivating power of its goals (inspiring those who are supposed to execute the policy) *or* because the policy matches values of those who have to live with it. That is the wellspring of the rather pragmatic mode of arguing from motivation.

The reader should be forewarned, particularly if she or he has moments of cynicism and hard-boiledness (or even medium-boiledness), in the motivational frame, Beevor almost sounds like an exhortative page from a human relations textbook written in the trusting 1960s, when he reached maturity in small-town eastern Ontario. Beevor's words also have resonances with a civics lecture spreading the value that in addition to legitimate collective decisions for allocation, sacrifices and reductions should be acceptable to those involved. Perhaps a faith in this ideal of collegiality, of pulling together, and of the willingness to share power, is requisite for stirring others? [8]

In one of his most insistent motivational arguments, Beevor talks up the virtues of administrators, before they even start a job, developing plans of action for school improvements. From trustees, superintendents, principals, teachers, janitors, and cafeteria staff, Beevor would have newly appointed officials elicit answers to such questions as, "What are your overall impressions of this school's operation? How are important decisions made here? What basic qualities are you looking for in the new incumbent? How can we help each other to be successful?" Responses should become grist for preparing several-month action plans, ones which then are shared with those colleagues who had been interviewed.

Often Beevor combines a cause-effect warrant with a motivational one. The shorthand version for his claimed Entry Plan goes something like this: "If you don't hear out others, you don't get a chance to try to change their minds." Alternatively, "I've found that the best way to influence others is to demonstrate that you can be influenced -- in feelings, attitudes, beliefs, futures. So while you're trying to influence me, I'm trying to influence you." Beevor's longhand warrant is that by so demonstrating that he or she is looking for assistance, an incoming

principal is assumed to spur other people to appreciate that they are genuine parts of the school team, thereby (it is hoped) boosting their support for the whole system and its policies. By swapping ideas with stakeholders, the principal affirms their human dignity as well as their senses of self-esteem and self-confidence. As the principal interacts through this medium to better know the alternatives that are available, she or he is mustering information for intelligent choices. Simultaneously, useful feelings of loyalty and solidarity in the community are being nurtured among those whom the principal has been caring enough to consult. By consequence, in Beevor's argument, that principal no longer comes across as a remote, impersonal figure. [9]

Beevor's reasoning is laced, of course, with a certain psychological practicality. The explanation underlying the Entry Plan is that when individuals do not understand reasons behind a policy, they retreat into cynicism, resistance, and alienation. Beevor's backing is that only if the individual is valued as part of the policy world is he or she likely to comprehend school objectives and problems, and only then is that individual likely to cooperate in realizing the policies that ultimately are made. Within Beevor's motivational theme, the mature principal realizes that if she or he cannot build upon interviewees' ideas for an Entry Plan, those interviewees deserve a close and honest reckoning of why, a recounting of which specific forces in the arena mitigate in what way against the adoption of the interviewees' ideas. [10]

Arguing From Parallel or Comparative Cases

In my observation, Beevor makes two basic sorts of comparative arguments for policy implementation. Most commonly, he tells associates about specific programs in other jurisdictions throughout the province or nation. Some of his allusions are to business too – a decade ago, Beevor flirted with the idea of becoming a management consultant for corporations, and he keeps up with that literature. To defend Halton's existing administrative structure, he contrasts articulations of Halton's families of schools *(relevant information)* with other boards' more sprawling, "disjointed," and costly bureaucracies *(parallel case or comparative warrant)*. To plant a seed for the sort of reform he hopes that Halton can adopt, his warrant sometimes may be that Halton faces problems and opportunities similar to those of other boards and "smart" industries. It is no secret, for instance, that he very much wanted Halton to produce a research newsletter as service-oriented for classroom teachers as two other boards in the region had; in this argument, other jurisdictions' outreach in this particular regard make, Halton look less than first-rate. [11]

A variation of comparing parallel implementations in different settings is an argument based on experiences of the same organization across time. The claim then becomes that past policies should move the organization towards adopting particular courses of action, usually those which are only marginally different from the status quo. Exploiting the relevant

information that Halton had adopted in the 1970s a Management-By-Objectives (M.B.O.) approach and a "Manager's Letter" as part of a confidential evaluation with each administrator. Beevor tied the M.B.O. more explictly into the Manager's Letter. Some weight also was placed on self-evaluation. A warrant for this policy is derived from the across-time assumption that present-day Halton has accountability needs similar to those recognized through earlier decisions.

SELECTED ARGUMENTS DURING POLICY EVALUATION

As with other school districts, when Halton's Board passes a policy, a date is set for its fundamental review, usually within three to five years. Officials then explore whether stronger contenders exist for the policy's resources elsewhere. They ascertain whether that policy should be revised, downgraded in priority, or terminated. Along the way, questions are asked about whether the policy, as implemented, seems successful in achieving desired outcomes.

For his part, Beevor tries to look not just at the policy itself -- "Policy changes fail," he muses, "either because of the *P*rocess or the *P*roduct or the *P*erson." Informally and formally, he seems to evaluate all of these three P-lettered components with the full gamut of argumentative modes. By way of a brief reprise of all the previously cited frames, I review an example or two of each.

Thus, on the basis of relevant information from budget sources and with a warrant in the method-centred mode, Beevor claims that a provincial process for disbursing funds for capital development is too "secretive"; the techniques of the money-dispensers are not open enough for a democracy, a point that shades into ethical and explanatory warrants. (He thus was continuing the traditon of Halton Directors to bash Ministry financing, i.e., the Mowat Block raises expectations while lowering resources.) As critically, Beevor evaluates Halton's process for selecting heads and new teachers (Halton's student population is growing): he senses that the people on each of the half-dozen or so interview panels are applying their own idiosyncratic standards; consistency is at risk. Later he brings in an expert to train panelists to ask the same sorts of questions and thus to rate candidates on a common scale. Eventually, problems arise with that expert's product too: some panelists do not use the set questions or ratings; they go with their own particularistic hunches. With consistency still uncertain, Beevor, his team, and the outside expert meet to evaluate the possibility that their new method of choosing staff is more form than substance. Is there a better way? Might hiring become more of a "bottom-up" process, where teachers screen applications, interview, conduct on-site evaluations, and determine the finalists? If this collegial approach were adopted, what new problems would ensue?

One example of a value-critical evaluation of policy sprang from a routine whereby Gideon Bibles were distributed to children in Grade Five, a matter that other boards also have

nad to deal with of late. The relevant information: schools requested that parents sign and return a specific form if they did not wish their children to receive Bibles through an in-class distribution. One year, parents in two families independently complained about this practice to Beevor. Their warrants were that this particular distribution of Gideons splits children into Christian and non-Christian groups while giving subtle authority to Christian beliefs. Beevor agreed with those parents' categorizations and, shortly afterwards, trustees agreed that the existing practice had to be modified. In due course, problems are likely to emerge from this resolution too. But, at present, parents seem satisfied in having the shoe on the other foot, so to speak: now if they want their child to receive a Bible, parents are to sign a form and the distribution occurs in an area other than a classroom (during recess or after school). For backing, Beevor and Pauline Laing, his Superintendent of Curriculum, argued that while an ethnocultural policy had yet to be hammered-out through Halton's meta-process, immediate steps had to be taken so complaints would not escalate into full-fledged battles over racism, minority rights, equality of opportunity for immigrant children, and lacks of role models drawn from minorities within ranks of Halton's educators (Woods, 1988). Not surprisingly, the overriding ethical warrant for putting the onus on the parents whose children are to receive the Bible was equality of treatment for children of different faiths.

Only rarely does an executive from of a large board get a chance to address an International Congress of Mathematics Educators -- conventional wisdom is that districts as sizeable as Halton's are too complex for Directors to assume direct responsibility for the sort of instructional leadership in which such math specialists are interested. The system's coordinator for math, Brendan Kelly was among those who were instrumental in shepherding through the system a pace-setting and intricate change in math evaluation. But it was Beevor, for his reputation as a "doer" with a hands-on sense of Halton's math changes, whom the aforementioned International Congress invited to Budapest. [12]

Over in the Hungarian capitol and elsewhere, when arguing for his evaluation format for math, Beevor routinely articulates relationships between cause and effect (see, for instance, Beevor and Russell, 1988). He reminds listeners of problems a teacher sees when a board requires external testing of her or his class' learnings -- if associated with low scores, then the teacher faces public embarrassment or reprimand. Any teacher-to-teacher comparisons of results may be bandied about recklessly, hurting reputations. Since such scores may be attributable to societal factors beyond the teacher's control, Beevor insists that it is high time an approach is in place which goes some distance to protect the anonymity of staff within schools. He holds that if individual teachers are not identified in the process, the validity of the testing data can be maintained. Appreciating that this sort of testing may be a difficult point for some teachers to accept, Beevor does not argue for immediate acceptance: in the words of Howard Russell, an OISE professor who was his testing consultant, Beevor does not push the innovation "beyond its natural pace. He allows time for the idea to sink in. He accepts opposition to the good idea in order to help give attention to it and to help clarify it."

Beevor also discourses about Halton's grade-level surveys that now produce across-the-system figures on average percentages of numerical, geometrical, and algebraic items that have been taught. When the district's evaluators learn, for instance, that only 35 percent of their math instructors have taught Item Number 29 (involving coordinate geometry), curriculum-writers are charged with devising more specific outcome-oriented materials to help 100 percent of the teachers deliver lessons on that Item. With these kinds of interactions and valuings of professional development, Beevor maintains the focus is more on curriculum-monitoring than on people-monitoring.

In fairness, it should be noted that this explanatory warrant has not been enough to persuade *all* of Halton's staff and trustees. Attesting to the point that problems are not so much solved as superseded by other problems, a Department Head points to the contradiction that students' achievements scores are available at the school level; *if* the school is small and *if* only one teacher is responsible for a tested subject, a problem may be created in that the evaluations' results do not altogether achieve the promised anonymity. Questioning of this evaluation comes too from several trustees who want to make the very comparisons that teachers and their unions want to avoid.

Argumentation is so bred into Beevor's bone that in conversations about these evaluations of curriculum policy, Beevor also regularly uses arguments of the parallel or comparative case. Besides referring to the nine other Ontario boards also involved in the aforementioned survey of math curriculum, he vouches the backing that similar approaches have been taken by authorities in Japan and sections of the U.S. True, he does not go so far as to say that Halton's policy evaluation is suitable because similar jurisdictions find that this form of curriculum-monitoring is worthwhile and successful, but that implication reasonably can be inferred.

Behind some of his other evaluations of policy is an intrinsic appreciation of the motivational power of values and intentions. A strong example of a motivational warrant appeared when Beevor reacted to a news announcement that a high-school facility belonging to a public board (in nearby Hamilton) was to be transferred, with no compensation, to a Catholic board in need of student places. This policy stemmed from a controversial law (Bill 30) providing governmental support for the full funding of Catholic secondary education, a funding which Separate School supporters in Ontario had long sought and which was prompting heavy student enrolments which Catholic systems could not handle without portables. Beevor, who had just heard about the imminent transfer on the radio in his old and somewhat dishevelled-looking station-wagon[13], provocatively evaluated the "hand-over-the-building" policy as a pocketbook issue that might be applied to his own system:

> Not that we're looking for a fight with our Separate School colleagues who need facilities too, but when Public School ratepayers paid 72 percent of a facility *(relevant information)* we'd like to get 72 percent of its value *(claim, with implied warrant that the money-saving values of Halton taxpayers should be respected)*....I don't know though if the Board wants to

> pursue that, and the provincial government may tell us to cool our heels, though. We'll have to see what unfolds*(rebuttal)*. *[Italicized words supplied.]*

As far as I could notice, Beevor's trumpet call "worked" with his small audience -- these educators moved forward in their chairs and their eyes seemed to light up with the "it's-our-money" motivation. Nonetheless with his balancing remark about "cooling heels," Beevor revealed an awareness that others may be less animated by his pitch. Perhaps speaking within the assumption that even his preferences about the transfer can change, he seemed open to learning from the new provincial policy (which ultimately "found" funds for purchasing at market value new Catholic facilities).

The authoritative mode, which celebrates the achieved or ascribed status of authorities such as experts or insiders,usually is not explicitly and singly used by Beevor. But implicitly he does call upon those outside sources, for in the midst of an evaluative discussion about a policy problem, he will not hesitate to drop a name. Hence, midway through a discussion where he has evaluated Halton as obsolescent with regard to mainstreaming, it is not unusual for Beevor to cite a British psychologist who, two months earlier, had made a favorable impression at a Professional Development day, e.g., "You know what Mortimore says on this?....About having low expectations? That's our problem." Weeks later, in another discussion about student learning, Beevor may bring closure by referring to that incisive Briton with a different context for a different assembly, e.g., "As Supervisory Officers, it would be good for us to sit in on Mortimore's classroom for three months. But then," he smiles broadly almost as if he would be giving away the shop, "who'd do the S.O. work?" Then in a subsequent month, Beevor may say to a union activist, "There are a lot of people around with good ideas....Did you see that article by Peter Mortimore?". Certain of Beevor's referents are to other internationally known workshop-presenters whom he has lined-up for Halton, e.g., Warren Bennis, Richard Beckhard, Howard Gardner, William Purkey.

Beevor explains his expert-invoking rhetoric itself by citing an authority (if an un-named writer can be considered an authority). "I once read," he remembers, "that the greatest changes come when you take advantage of other people's initiatives." When those others are well-regarded as highly-qualified producers of advice, in effect Beevor boosts his own policy evaluations.

Leadership, Policy, and Argument

"I'm like [the detective-attorney] Perry Mason, piecing things together," Wally Beevor once said of himself. From the representative data I have reported on this widely interactive man, I hope to suggest that this chief executive officer is versatile in his "piecing-together" of elements of argumentation. What I have not adequately suggested, though, is how Beevor

combine these rhetorical ways of reasoning. One illustration of that point can be one of his own personal policies that impacts his organization's credibility. But first, a little background.

At backyard picnics and at various clubs or restaurants in his pre-Halton days at the Lakehead, Beevor had spent time bridge-building with trustees and staff. During post-mortems of Board meetings, "the Director and his potentially major protagonist resolve[d] more conflict after midnight than can be generated before" (Nelson, 1980). After an especially stormy, paternalistic, and go-slow-with-reform past, the Lakehead crew was at last innovating and developing a sense of togetherness. The camaraderie of such informal occasions at Lakehead enabled the Director and his wife to build support for new policy directions. When Beevor moved to Halton, however, he made a clean break from such close relationships. Weekdays, he was quick with energetic "Helloes," seeming to treat all with the same heartiness, and he won points by being able to address by name each teacher in various work groups. Like his predecessors and like fellow-directors, he might have his afternoon coffee with a purchasing agent or a media technician and he might help staff when their cars broke down in front of the central office. He still popped up unannounced in schools to talk with principals (but not so much with teachers or students) about particular topics. Weeknights, he was active in executive sessions getting a sense of the whole Board's confidence levels and leanings on hot issues. Weekends, he would have friendly chats with staff he happened to bump into at the Bi-Way Discount store or at the antique furniture auctions he loved to patronize. But when it came to post-mortems and to parties, Beevor remained apart. If he accepted an invitation to a social function, he would stay only briefly. And he did not invite back.

Once I heard him justify this strikingly different-from-Lakehead style. Let me diagram his rationales for this marked shift in relationships with followers:

FIGURE 2 ABOUT HERE

Beevor made no explicit argument with a parallel-case referrent to another board, but implicitly his pitch was a recognition that Lakehead's circumstances were different than Halton's.

As might be expected in a world where solving one problem only gives rise (if we're lucky) to more interesting difficulties, this particular policy transformed a recognized problem into one of lesser magnitude -- a few staff told me that, while they very much respected their personable Director, sometimes he seemed to keep his social self overly distant. They wanted "to hoist a few" with him, to hobnob with him in school staff rooms, to make his "open door" policy for more rank- and-file folks.

MORE THEORETICAL WORK NEEDED

Prudence dictates the acknowledgement that some of Beevor's arguments may be scoffed at by skeptics who have the 1980s' distrust of institutions. Particularly those who would empower teachers and communities may see his (and other administrators') discourse as a vehicle for control, containment, and regulation (Ball, 1987; Ferguson, 1984; Gronn, 1983, McLeod, 1988). Conceivably, a neo-Marxist re-analysis of Beevor's rhetoric might even show it to co-opt dissent, to reinforce power structures and ideologies that oppress the weak, and to suppress important questions of "Who is hurt in terms of social, economic, and cultural power?" by those policies he advocates. Halton's heretofore-mentioned performance rating of A or B (among 75 percent of respondents) may palpably serve the organization's public self-interest, the meta-process may not bring into the open conflicting values about student welfare, people of certain ages or backgrounds may be discriminated against in promotions, certain middle-level managers may get the favorable attention of superiors in inhumane ways, and so forth. In the words of a scholar who studies how the language of U.S. leaders consciously and unconsciously serve the elite, Beevor's words may even gop so far as to perpetuate "privileges, disadvantages, aggressions, and violence" (Edelman, 1987). Certain of his arguments may be rooted in efficiency ideologies emanating from a general technocratic rationality holding a) that quantitative models should be accorded status as the superior mode of reasoning, and b) social progress is realized through sophisticated social engineering that disrespects local values (cf. my footnote [10]). About Beevor as well as other chief executive officers of schools, assuredly a close study along those critical lines would be enlightening.

Assuming that people do not just make decisions but they have to give reasons for them, additional research can be done about the relevant grounds on which leaders base their policies. Of course the value-critical work of Hodkinson (1978) is relevant here, as is the theme of those who insist that administrators' first line of argumentation should be pedagogical. (Has Beevor's successor less of an adult-oriented and more of a child-oriented tone?) A case study could measure the persuasiveness of Beevor's arguments on their audiences, possibly gauging the impact of his rhetoric as opposed to other recognized skills of his – in diagnosis, delegating, following-through, trouble-shooting, creating rewards, taking risks, and so forth. Perhaps too a researcher could find a relationship between the quality of the reasons that Beevor uses on the one hand with his policy successes and with his policy controversies (some might say "failures") on the other hand[14]; is there a difference? With or without premediation, does he use different modes to reach different kinds of people? (My hunch is that he does, e.g., in Budapest, he pitched his math-testing plan to a learned audience in terms of change theory, while back home he sold the plan to teachers in terms of professional development in the right places at the right time.) Beevor's effectiveness in defending his positions against legitimate criticism also might be compared to other admired administrators in and outside of local education. "Who do policy administrators at different levels of government talk to, about what, when, and how?" might be a still broader research topic. Through study, rhetorical rules for success for influencing chief executive officers also might be

traced.

Yet from Beevor's exemplar, perhaps enough has been said to suggest that policy administration can include more than the expression of goals, power, rights, or interest. Vision, analytic capability, and soundness are often seen as the prerequisites for an organizational leader, but she or he also could use impetus, impulse, and push for articulating that vision, capability, and soundness. Through argumentation, top bureaucrats are not simply entertaining themselves and others with haphazard verbiage as opposed to sober statements. The data on Beevor's suggest that the several modes of warrants and backings may help other leaders defend their institutions' integrity and share their senses of reality to move their organizations through the policy cycle. It might even prove worthwhile for administrators consciously to try diversifying their reasons, thereby making as complete a case for their claims as possible. Even going so far as to diagram an important argument might turn out to be wise homework.

A case can be made, then, that argumentations help pinpoint the existence of policy problems. With attention to the structure of persuasive reasoning, a policy administrator may be able help others realize that the problems may be categorized in ways that makes them susceptible to resolution through certain kinds of implementations. Through careful and intelligent rhetoric about policy evaluations, people in talk-intensive roles of leadership can elaborate the character of those new problems that almost inevitably arise out of efforts to deal with old ones. Put another way, administration is not just a role that is neutrally played out, but a rhetorical practice that has the capacity to affect how others interpret policies. These, anyway, are a few "rhetorical" points for building a general theory of leadership in educational policy.

NOTES

1 Because of space limits and because Beevor does not use many in his arguments, references in this chapter to *rebuttals* are minimal.

2 Dunn (p. 81) also distinguishes the *argument from analogy* where claims are based on assumptions that relationships (not cases themselves) among two or more policies are essentially similar. In this report, this mode is not highlighted.

3 Initially, the rhetorical identity I found was of a man who seldom is cynical -- as he ages or in private, he may yet become suspicious but only a few times in the course of scores of lengthy conversations have I heard him imply that there may be a gap between another person's words and actions. Beevor also is not given to detecting cabals or small cliques as dictating policy. He weaves between generalizations and particularizations, becoming most detailed in talking about fiscal responsibility and financial planning (reportedly Halton has recently pioneered in financing school modernizations with debentures). Historical allusions definitely are not his style -- just once did I hear him speak of an semi-historical antecedent, widespread doubling-shifts in Ontario schools in the 1960s. In my log notes, he seems as future-oriented as presentistic, just as he tends to emphasize the practically feasible as opposed to the distant utopian. These verbal characteristics, which previously have been parts of delineations of the talk and belief systems of politicians (Putnam, 1967; Townsend, 1988), *in and of themselves* are not especially interesting, for they do not violate any expectations we may have of superordinate administrators.

4 Downey has since written a helpful, prescriptive book on this meta-process, *Policy Analysis in Education*, Calgary: Detselig, 1988.

5 Have Beevor's arguments for the meta-policy been accepted? My trustee-interviewees volunteered that the process, now in place for a half-dozen years, is appreciated as "efficient" and "philosophically sound." "Local policies are not introduced," one board member told me, "unless there is an 80 percent chance of approval." "Communication and motivation is improved," another trustee said.

Even so, the process is not trotted out as a virtue by those trustees who have had "a long struggle" to advocate the interests of their community's schools (sometimes these concerns are as concrete as a pot-holed parking lot or poor facilities for student lunches). Although "the committee is the place for the trustee to be effective" (one trustee's estimate), another thinks the debate at certain standing committees can be superficial, with individual items being insufficiently probed. She adds that administrators can be "too set in their ways" when it comes to developing alternatives. A former Board member also points out that, for all the process' emphasis on committee deliberation, Beevor still has to lobby with trustees on a one-to-one basis for a few selected causes. This ex-trustee

is not fretful over that lobbying, so much as he is commenting on leadership efforts that he thinks appropriate for a Director.

Administrators generally seem to value the procedures Beevor has installed through devices such as the process' policy manual -- "We know what to do all the time, there's criteria for performing our roles," one principal says. Subject-matter consultants appear to appreciate the meta-process too, although one comments with acerbity on its relentless focusing:

At the Board, Beevor always looks clean -- he doesn't put issues on the agenda unless they've already gotten a lot of support. *[Interviewer: How's that?]* Oh, he tells S.O.s, "It's your report, and if you don't seek input from others before taking it forward, you may run into trouble."....If trustees start shooting down a policy proposal at a public meeting, there's always the chance Beevor may do what he did a couple of times at Lakehead -- jump in and bawl out the presenter.

None of my informants recalled any such chastisements from Beevor at public meetings of the Halton Board (some key officials did remember, some wistfully, others ruefully, a few public admonishments from the Director at Administrative Council, though, but these were at the outset of Beevor's term). Rather, at Board sessions, consistently Beevor has stood back and let the trustees handle controversies. "The trustees retain the ultimate authority and accountability for the system," I heard him explain more than once. Even in the face of "badly conceived" decisions, Beevor keeps his silence. One Superintendent explains, "Whatever trustees decide, it's not the end of the world. We can always go back next time with more facts and try making things right. . . . The system allows for that."

Although hostility and anxiety initially greeted certain new curriculum guidelines associated with the meta-process (but also attributable to the provincial Ministry), the sense that I kept getting was that staff are adapting more of the initiatives that the Board had enacted. A teacher attributed this shift to "the policy and Beevor continuing the policy of providing money for professional development and teacher interaction...It wasn't just the principal 'walking through' the document with you any more." A Department Head remarked that "We were able to exercise more control of mandated change." This observation was depicted as a virtue, as if the process was overcoming twists of fate that prevented staff from controlling their own destinies.

In the view of a number of rank-and-file teachers that I talked with, however, the meta-process means cogitating, however cursorily, about what the Board wants, and then -- if those wants approximate what the staff wants -- putting into practice their own versions of the policy. "Otherwise, it's a waste of time," one such educator says, recalling the teacher's everyday power to close the door, to remain quite unaffected by new policy, but to claim that "Yes, sir, the policy is being implemented." Another explains occasional non-compliance with Board policy as stemming from a meta-process that is not "messy" enough. The routine is seen to favor those who speak the system's technocratic language of objectives, alternatives, and criteria:

> Everytime we get together to discuss anything, we have to have to develop a mission statement. You get tired of having to think in those terms, of having to put things on paper. We want to throw up over that *(gestures with fingers to mouth, as if inducing vomit)*. The process is all terribly

> rational, some of us don't think that linearly. *[Interviewer: Linearly?]* You know, what you do when you move very sequentially through a series of logical steps. Right-brainers feel like their intuitions aren't valued unless they can be quantified and systematized and objectified . . . Heavy.

I have not heard Beevor address that discontent with any policy argument, value-critical, method-oriented, or whatever. What I have heard that his energetic successor has redirected this press a bit so that, as one Superintendent says, "We're smiling more now."

6 Nobody has called the routine infallible. Beevor himself tells how the process broke down when the Board rejected a long-in-the-making Outdoor Education policy that would have necessitated buying recreation acreage. From this episode, Beevor's reflection was that the presentation of the proposal was ill-timed, coming within days of Halton's residents receiving their tax bills. "The public was on the phone complaining to trustees about higher school costs," Beevor says, "and voting *No* to Outdoor Education gave trustees a chance to hang tough against bigger budgets....When we put Outdoor Ed on the agenda, we didn't even think of the fallout from the tax hike." From this, the listener gets two distinct impressions: *1)*, Beevor will not make that tax-bill mistake again, and *2)*, timing of presentations will become a touchstone in his meta-process.

7 Beevor's fellow-breakfasters especially seemed to appreciate his understandings of doings at the provincial level, especially his bashing of the Ministry for, say, its "unrealistic" or "paradoxical" formulas for calculating numbers of classrooms and its curriculum guidelines that "need to be simplified." Beevor could also praise provincial mandarins for getting a new grant programs through the legislature and, of more importance, generally reducing its rule-making for local boards. In these provincial ruminations too, outcroppings surfaced of a mentality attuned to argumentation: "Not enough secondary principals are preparing themselves for board-level policy-making," he concluded one morning out of his experience on a provincial panel for picking Supervisory Officers. (By policy in the Education Act, S.O.s are empowered to become superintendents and directors). Beevor mentioned how mostly elementary principals are securing those credentials *[relevant information]* with the result that "A vacuum is being created in terms of sensitivity to secondary problems . . . . Secondary people are being put on the sidelines *(implementation claims)*. There must be a perception that a high-school principal has less hassle, more actualization, than an S.O." *(warrant explaining the claim)*.

8 A genesis of the argument in this section was Beevor's beginning work in education, during the 1960s as a sports coach, where "I always consulted parents in what the team was doing . . . . It's natural for me to think of bringing stakeholders on board . . . . People lose their enthusiasm and so you try to keep them committed." This thrust toward human development was furthered, he says, by his work as a learner and then as a teacher of small-group relations at the National Training Laboratory (NTL) in Bethel, Maine.

9 Entry Plans are now not just commonplace in Halton – I heard a new secretary talking

about her own Entry Plan -- but throughout Ontario education. From other districts, I have had principals *qua* masters' students at OISE, for instance, refer to them uncomplainingly as sensitizing them to make a good first impression on the job. Across the province, Beevor is credited with advancing this format for leaders trying to understand the culture with which they are dealing before they start to administer. In assorted forums, Beevor talks widely about how he himself had used such an approach, interviewing people in Halton and then producing a six-month plan for action, before taking up the Director's day-to-day tasks. "It's worked for me," he explains when he voluntarily sends an Entry Plan packet to each newly-appointed director in the province.

10 For what it may be worth, my reading of Beevor is that he did not see the Entry Plan or his various other participatory mechanisms as slick stratagems to engineer consent or to mislead individuals into thinking they have influence when actually he preserved all critical decisions to himself. To begin, in my view, in itself the meta-process -- with its accent on consultation -- did not necessarily strengthen his own power. (To be sure, the possibility exists that its communitarian ideal was corrupted during the working-out of policies, but a different kind of study would be required to discover that.) Then too, other insightful people in the system tended to reduce Beevor's authority and any propensities he might have had towards error. In this regard, on one of numerous occasions when I saw him influenced by others, he was almost alone among members of a scheduling committee arguing (with an explanation about possible adverse reaction from parents and trustees) that Halton's classes should begin the same day, not the day after, as the rest of the province's schools. But educators of the scheduling committee wanted September 5 to be a "Let's-pull-our-act-together" professional development day for staff. Although he was not persuaded by their rationale, in the end Beevor was influenced by the higher procedural consideration that the decision was quite legitimately within the committee's purview, not his; if the Board wanted to over-rule that collegial decision, it would. As it happened, the Board didn't over-rule, and parents did not mobilize against the committee's determination.

My observation is that, more often than not, Beevor lives the norms of the Entry Plan's attention to others. At meetings about implementation, rather than asserting (as some directors might), "That's my decision," conciliatorily he might lean over at various times to respect others' needs with "Can you live with that?", "Is this causing any difficulty?", and "Are you happy with the arrangement?". Beevor spins his glasses to allow, "Hmmm, we hadn't thought of that." He looks up from a report to remark,"What are these teachers telling us?". He tries to take hold of another's input, "There's something to what you say. Help us. Can you rephrase that?". At times, Beevor does not hesitate to confront other positions -- "I don't see it that way," "I find that approach distasteful," "That's *dumb* -- if I may say that in the privacy of this meeting" and "You're destroying the evidence" -- but my data suggest that, adhering to a central NTL lesson at Bethel, Beevor at least *tries* to separate the problem from the person.

From details he has told me about staff in particular schools (a "dynamic" art teacher at Maplehurst, a consultant on computers "with immediate credibility," a "spectacular" drama teacher at Lord Elgin, et al.), by and large he appears to want to keep the field clear so that people of creative intelligence can be motivated towards

implementing policies that satisfy the self and the organization. Still, in the event of a clash of interests and should some way out not be found, Beevor explains: as an accountable official, he believes that preferences of individual staff members (e.g., for assignments to particular schools or classes) should be considered after needs specified by the organization, i.e., its peak leaders.

Importantly, some would contest this position, seeing it as one that is based on science and rationality with its depiction of organizations as real entities. Another position, rooted in philosophy, views "the organization" as only a fiction, a constructed reality, merely a concept that is acted out. In this reckoning, the organization is people doing things around a set of values and purposes; rather than necessarily always putting the organization first and foremost, the administrator needs to work alongside others to better understand the purposes and means that bring these people together in right decisions about their situations. On this perspective, see for instance Greenfield (1985) and Hodgkinson (1978).

11 In a discerning study of the organizational premises at the Lakehead Board during Beevor's tenure there, Nelson (1980) has pointed to this administrator's "magpie" quality. Beevor himself calls this activity "tail-gating" onto others' ideas from any source that might give educators ammunition to do what they think suitable for education. From his contacts, Beevor "finds and brings home ideas, skills, concepts, and people" (Nelson, 1980). In Halton, I saw this same proclivity. For instance, Beevor gave a group of communications consultants, with decades of experiences with hundreds of school boards south of the border, one of their first Canadian contracts. (Granted, that decision did trigger problems -- nationalists complained that Canadian communication experts were being ignored, but Beevor explained that those Canadian consultants had no in-school experience -- and their bids were higher.) One final example of Beevor as would-be tail-gator: when he thought that this particular study of mine would be a comparative one of two boards' operations -- a participant observer can be open to anything -- he wanted me to hurry-up and please release my not-yet-drafted and still-unconceptualized findings; he had assumed that I was a much faster writer than I am able to be.. Hoping for comparisons, Beevor thought that Halton might "pick the plums" of some other Board's implementation strategies. "If I come across anything 'out there' that's relevant," he said, "I ask myself, 'How can I bring it home for Halton?'".

12 Halton, regarded in some circles as a "lighthouse district," probably would have arrived at this policy evaluation without Beevor, but my reading of the situation is that his entrepreneurship accelerated and set details.

13 Perhaps reflecting a ratepayers' or an agrarian perspective that city educators can be overpaid spendthrifts, portions of Halton appear to have "a strong thing" against adminstrators who drive conspicuously expensive cars. For instance, spokespersons for the custodians' union chide an administrator who drives a red Porsche. Founding Director Singleton somewhat "got back" at such old-line critics, who in 1969 were skeptical that anyone could be worth his $29,000 annual salary, by flaunting around the community in an

old but still-stylish Rolls-Royce.

14 The latter included the protracted turmoil about closing Perdue School, a lack of spark in certain high schools, a disproportionate prevalence in administration of males (from a particular secondary school and from certain fields)," one of the province's highest pupil-teacher ratios -- curious for a region now so affluent -- and, not least, a perceived over-whelming of staff with policy initiatives that are associated with the central office. About this last matter of policy overload, one teacher told me:

> We have three Assistant Superintendents in the central office and each has their own Vision. Each says "Grow, Grow, Grow." Gary says we're doing a 12-year program in 6 years . . . . The troops are drowning....Can't do everything.

Almost a half-dozen other staff, wearily, voiced this theme too. Beevor was aware of that burn-out, and unlike other directors I've overheard, he did *not* harp that "Teachers are always belly-aching or that administrators inevitably are under-appreciated." Recurrently he warned his superintendents that "We should be careful not to over-commit ourselves," or "We didn't achieve all of last year's policy levels," and so forth. After Beevor's retirement, some backlash may have set in against the central-serving routines. Interestingly, Robert Williams, an insider former Superintendent and his successor as Halton's Director, has been moving the system toward a greater decentralization which would "empower" overloaded school staffs to set more of their own policy levels. Those grassroots still are expected to work through the meta process' assorted steps.

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Figure 1:

Diagram of a Short Argument for Employment Equity

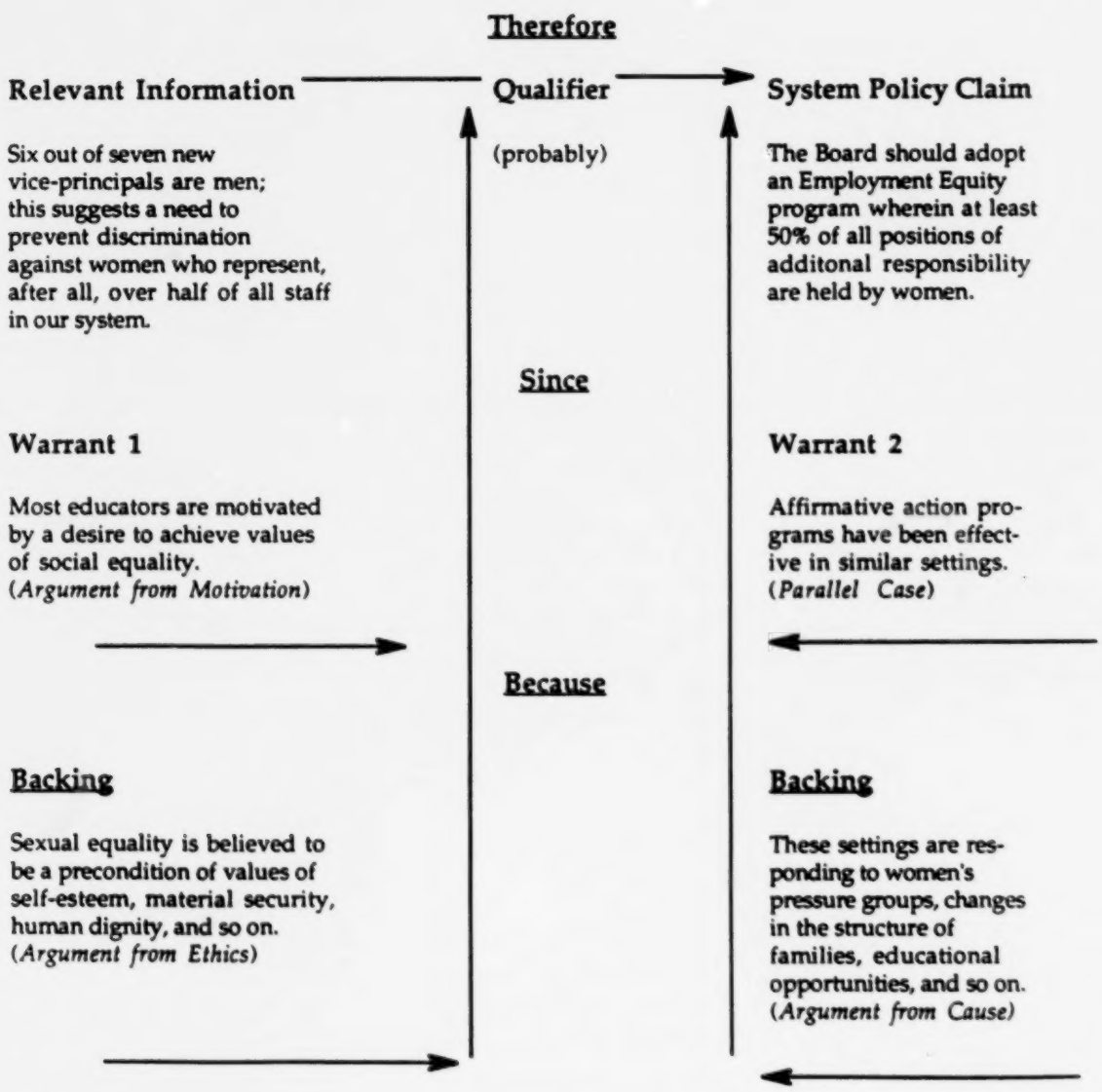
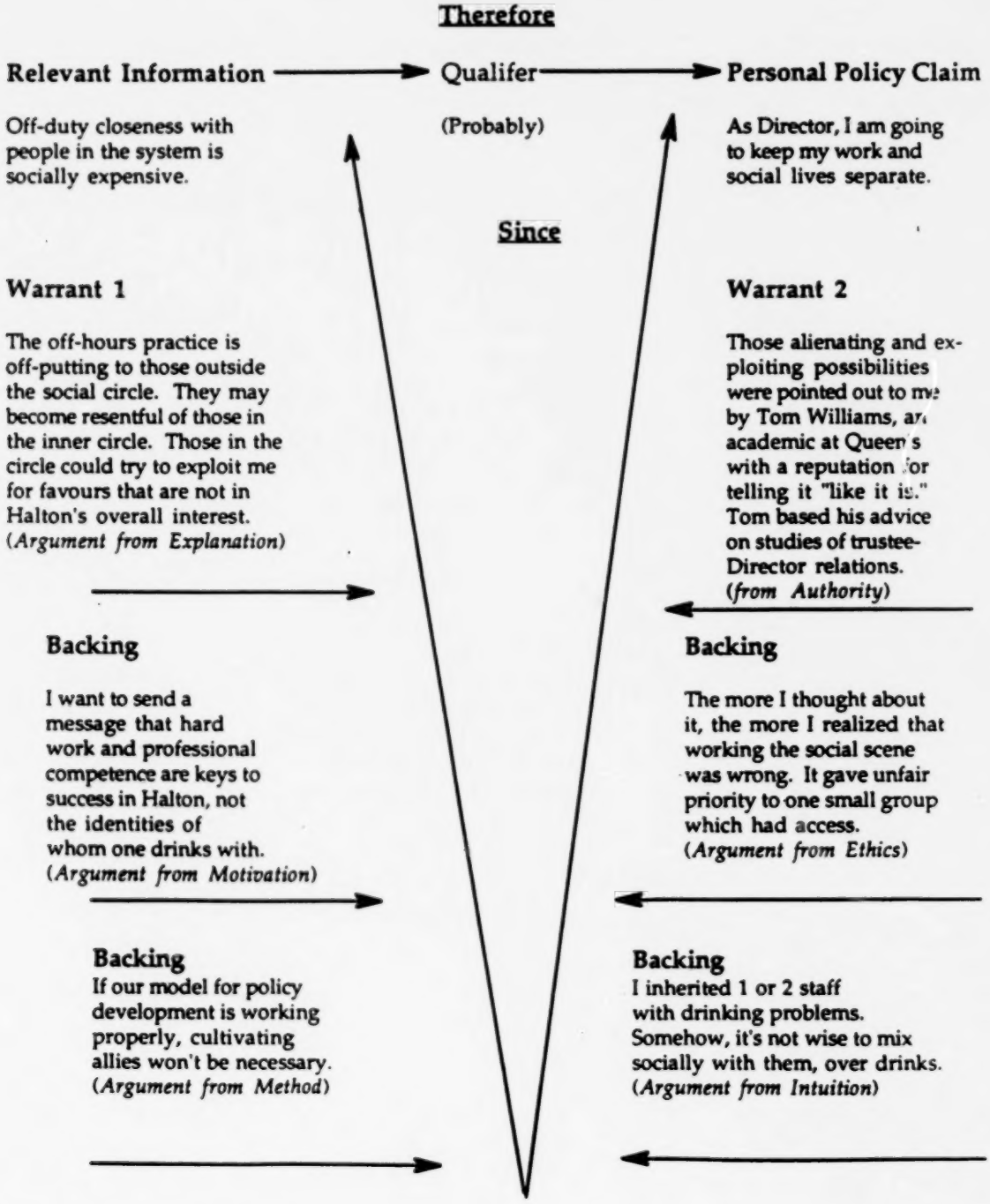

Therefore
Relevant Information
Qualifier
System Policy Claim
Six out of seven new vice-principals are men; this suggests a need to prevent discrimination against women who represent, after all, over half of all staff in our system.
(probably)
The Board should adopt an Employment Equity program wherein at least 50% of all positions of additonal responsibility are held by women.
Since
Warrant 1
Most educators are motivated by a desire to achieve values of social equality. (Argument from Motivation)
Warrant 2
Affirmative action programs have been effective in similar settings. (Parallel Case)
Because
Backing
Sexual equality is believed to be a precondition of values of self-esteem, material security, human dignity, and so on. (Argument from Ethics)
Backing
These settings are responding to women's pressure groups, changes in the structure of families, educational opportunities, and so on. (Argument from Cause)

Figure 2:

Diagram of an Argument on Not Mixing Business and Socializing


Therefore
Relevant Information
Qualifer
Personal Policy Claim
Off-duty closeness with people in the system is socially expensive.
(Probably)
As Director, I am going to keep my work and social lives separate.
Since
Warrant 1
The off-hours practice is off-putting to those outside the social circle. They may become resentful of those in the inner circle. Those in the circle could try to exploit me for favours that are not in Halton's overall interest. (Argument from Explanation)
Warrant 2
Those alienating and exploiting possibilities were pointed out to me by Tom Williams, an academic at Queen's with a reputation for telling it "like it is." Tom based his advice on studies of trustee-Director relations. (from Authority)
Backing
I want to send a message that hard work and professional competence are keys to success in Halton, not the identities of whom one drinks with. (Argument from Motivation)
Backing
The more I thought about it, the more I realized that working the social scene was wrong. It gave unfair priority to one small group which had access. (Argument from Ethics)
Backing
If our model for policy development is working properly, cultivating allies won't be necessary. (Argument from Method)
Backing
I inherited 1 or 2 staff with drinking problems. Somehow, it's not wise to mix socially with them, over drinks. (Argument from Intuition)